

Interview with
Jose Torres
Claremont, California
June 23, 1957

have been working w/ Nationals

~~Yes~~, since about 1943. In other words, I took some of the first nationals that landed ~~on~~ ⁱⁿ Campo San Antonio here in Monte Vista on 5th Avenue in Pomona, that is where they have their camp. I ~~think they did~~ *After W W II,* ~~for a little bit.~~ Well, that was when we had that invasion of the wetbacks or wire-jumpers, or whatever else you might call them. These boys just came in freely and walked right across California up to the San Joaquin Valley, *riding the trains,* on the coast. Here in Claremont we had quite a few, and in La Verne they did too. Every town in Sourther California from the Imperial Valley, I would say, up to; I don't know how far into Oregon or Washington, but I know that they were in the state of California, and I mean the whole area was pretty well filled up. Probably 50 or 60,000 of them. *(wets)* I had them boys with ~~me~~ up in the San Joaquin Valley and here in Claremont too. But, they had to bring the immigration from Texas, and *(border patrol)* they wiped them just about out. Some of the growers, ranchers, and farmers were told that they had to get rid of some of them boys or else they ~~were~~ ^{want} ~~it~~ going to get any help coming in legally. So, that is how they finally wiped ^{out} them out. *There are a few left, one or two here or there, but not enough to do any damage.*

~~No, these boys come in through~~ *the first Nationals* They were contracted in Mexico City, and they were shipped all over the 48 states. I know for sure that between ^{36 & 38} states ~~that~~ had them, from New York to California. ~~And then~~ ^{well} working in railroad track and most with agriculture. ^{by} So they had to provide housing for them. And the first thing they had to was have a cabin, room or a big house with a mattress and blankets. Some of these growers, to begin with, when they hired 3 or 4 boys and they could keep them in their ranch, ~~and~~ they gave them ^a blankets and a mattress, let them board themselves. So the only thing they did for them was drive them into town to the grocery store to get their groceries.

But, in big camps like the one ^{they have} San Antonio and Cucamonga, and all over the state; from Washington down to California, they have to have a camp where everybody

like you say Claremont.

then you are

a grower or a rancher

or whatever you are raising. Because a citrus man is mostly oranges, lemons, and grapefruits. And agriculture, what that runs to is tomatoes, onions and all kinds of vegetables. Then, in the fruit; peaches, pears, grapes, prunes, oh, all kinds of that stuff.

~~Yes~~, I am a crew leader. I run these crews from the camps, ^{like they mostly have} I go in with my truck and I have it all fixed up with canvas, and I can fit between 20 to 30 men to be comfortable. In a truck with a larger truckbed you can fit 50 to 60 men, ^{you know.}

Because you have to carry insurance too. You can't have ^{them} these boys piled up in the ^{the law says} truck to ride 10-15 miles to work. You have to have a bench or a seat, reinforced with bolts to the bed, so that it will not swing around, and the boys can sit in there, ^{& ride comfortable.} But, the job I am doing right now is picking lemons. Is, oh, in between ^{from the camp to the groves} is 10-12 miles.

The groves are in Vista, Escondido, Rancho Santa Fe. We have 4 groves in ^{Fullerton & San Marcos} and the camp I am staying in is San Luis Rey, one of the oldest ~~in 1798~~. And this

camp is a new camp and holds between 200 to 250 men there. Most of them boys are doing a lot of ^{right now} planting for the Japanese farmers. But, we have ^{in Fullerton} our citrus growers that have about 60 men and ^{the} company had 40 to 60 ^{in working for - that's} men at one time, now we have only about 27. We are picking lemons everyday.

^{I take 'em out} About 6 o'clock in the morning, ^{put 'em to work about 7:00} It usually takes us an hour to get to ^{the grove.} work. So when you put them to work, you work 9-10-11 hours a day. Then ^{at} quitting time you check ^{then} your boxes and you drive them back to camp. They have their chow between 6 and 7. They have showers in the camp, ^{nice showers,} toilets, and wash ^{basin} tubs for the ^{men.} And they have long barracks where they can

put in 20^{or 30} or 30 men with a mattress and ^{a couple} blankets. In wintertime they give them four blankets, but in summertime they only use one or two blankets. And most of these boys have their own ^{little} radios to play. On

the week-end they go to church if they can get over there; ~~because~~ some-

times the church is pretty far; ^{sometimes I take in in my truck;} sometimes they walk over to the church.

^{The priest comes in to talk to the boys in the camp.} Sometimes, like this Cucamonga camp they have a barracks fixed up to

^{holding 150-200 men.} provide for Mass, ^{I would say} And like the Cucamonga camp, that is one of the best

camps in Souther California, I am not talking about the others, because

they all have to ^{be} have up to the regulations, because this year they ^{they were giving up the boys pretty bad.} have been pretty rough on them. So this year they ^{had some} have ^{inspectors coming around.}

This Cucamonga camp has ~~about~~ one of the biggest housing barracks in all

~~this~~ this valley. They can hold up to 1500 men. ^{try have to.} They have a pool room

with three tables. They have a pretty good sized room with a T.V. set

for the boys, it sits about 50 to 60 ^{at night.} And they have a playground where

they can play baseball; and they have a lot of shade and trees ~~of~~ all

kinds and a table there so the boys can relax. So, I would call that

one of the best camps for the ^{boys from Mexico.} nationals.

^{The S. A. has a playground, but not big enough. (over)}

But, talking about these boys, I think they are just about the best

for agriculture. And I am not talking against my local boys, because

after the ^{war} ~~way~~ a lot of the locals ^{boys} moved into construction, factories and

~~some~~ stores; and they ^{don't want to come back to agriculture.} will not return to the fields. So the farmer or

the grower has to hire these boys that come from down there ^{in Mexico.}

Well, ^{the locals,} talking about ~~that~~ ^{about} before the war, I would say that they

were just ^{Nationals.} the same. They probably were better because they were raised

in the ~~of~~ fields of California. ^{I was one of them.} I put in 14 years picking lemons before

I went in as a foreman. And about the tricks of picking lemons, I know

them all. You have to know them. ^{the first day} So, when you break these boys in you

have to get them all together and tell them, 'lemons are picked this way.'

So, you tell them and show them about the clippers, rings and sacks.

the clippers go in right hand, the ring ^{middle finger of} left hand.

Mostly they are ~~pick~~ right handers.

Then you show 'em how to handle a ladder.
And then to begin with about Novembet, December, Hanuary, February, March, maybe April, you don't pick any ~~pre-ripe~~ ^{tree-}ripe; you pick nothing but ring-size. *There are 3 or 4 sizes.*

But, gradually your lemons are coming in, coming in, and you wait and see if these lemons size up. ~~Sure~~ ^{more money} the big size lemons bring in the ~~price~~ ^{for} from the grower and all they want to pick is size lemons. But when the summer comes in May and your lemons start getting dead ripe; well,

naturally you have to take them all ~~down~~ ^{off}. We are stripping right now.

After 1st picking, 75% of lemons are left on trees. Come back each 6 weeks or 2 months.
Well, a national that never touched a ring or clippers, or sack;

and has done mostly hoeing *or shovelling* and he comes to pick lemons

with this and you have to show him all the tricks about picking lemons;

it will take ~~in between~~ ^{about} four weeks. *to get so you can leave him alone.* But still as long as that goes, that

means you show him how to pick, how to clip the lemon, not to cut the button ~~and in leaving~~ ^{or leave} a lot of stem. Then you have to show him where

to put the boxes, how to put his number, and he has to fill his boxes

right to the limit that the grower expects. And he has got to know that

any long stem that goes into the boxes will puncture the lemons. The

foreman has between 20 to 30 men and he has got to go down that drive

back and forth all day. And ~~when you show these boys what to do,~~ you

have to show them ~~where~~ ^{what} a "set" is. A set to pick is ⁿ a grove

means six trees. One man picks six trees and when he finishes those six,

he moves on to the next set. Most of our groves are 10 acres to 15 and 20.

If some of these boys want to go home after their 1st contract.
~~20. But,~~ what I am talking about is that they get homesick. I would

say that one out of ten goes back every six weeks; or I would say that

one out of five, ^{sometimes.} but most of these boys recontract.

Well, it all depends what they are paying them. If they are getting

on 35¢ or 40¢
39¢ a box they usually go between 15 to 20 boxes on an crew average, *per day.*

But you always have on 20 to 25 men, you ~~have~~ always have about half of

them faster workers than the other half. Whatever you pick you get

paid for. *26 pick 20 boxes, maybe you'd pick 15.*

There are three kinds of pickers: the fast, the medium and there is the slow. Well, in a crew of 30 men you probably have about 10 fast boys.
men.

When stripping fruit
In good picking they get in between ³⁰20 and ⁴⁰30 boxes a day. The ^{others} fast workers get ²⁵30 to ³⁰25; then the others go about 20. But when they are picking on size the fast man comes around 20 to 25; the other fellow follows with about 18-16; and the slow fellow 14-15. (over)

paying.
Well, this year there was a big change. They used to get either 30¢ a box and that was it. But now they have one of these deals that sometimes I can't even understand myself. You have to count your trees. In other words, if you pick a grove that has between 5 to 600 trees and the boys pick probably 4 or 500 boxes that means a tree to the box. *Then they pay* On the average per tree, sometimes you see 1000 tree in about 10 acres, or maybe more than

mountain
If you pick the whole grove in the ^{one}same day that gives the boys a little more money. Some groves are better than others. They have better

fruit. Better size. And some ~~prick~~ groves are pretty run down. *Even if you do the best you can, you can't make out.*

But now the whole thing has change, now they pay them through the ~~the grove~~ *the grove was 40¢/tree - others 35¢ or 30¢.* trees they pick. And the foreman has to count the trees. *But, these*

boys I would say all of them go out and do all they can. *maybe out of 25 you would find 1 or 2...*

Well, the average paycheck runs on a two week basis. But you find that some of these boys can't take care of their money, even if they make \$100/week. I would say between about 3 out of 10, like to drink beer, etc. Some of them boys, especially a national

that has passed his ~~25th~~ 35th year, take care of their money pretty

good. well. The younger national does not take as good care of his money, *between 21-30* maybe only

(out of 10.) They either dress-up, buy clothes, *drink,* have a good time, or ~~get~~ hitch up with some woman, they ~~gam~~ gamble a little bit, *just like anybody else.* But, it

like seems that the man over 36 takes better care of his money than the younger national; and they usually do it, I don't care where you go,

And they are better workers and I think you can trust them better when they get around 35 or 40.

This year they changed the pay rate from straight
 piece rates to something I can't always understand
 myself. Depends on the trees, the number of trees,
 the size of the trees, the fruit on each fruit. Some
 groves are in better shape than others. This is the
 worst a little better bush. a poor grove pays maybe 40¢ a box.
 In my crew, half picked over 30 boxes. a good
 there are good, experienced pickers. one, maybe
 one boy hit 40. Loaders only had 8-10
 boxes, but they get \$1.00/hr. while loading the truck.
 845 boxes, 23 men, 10 1/2 hours.
 My earned \$9-10 a day. ^{But this is good picking.} But they
 can't average that every day.
 We work 6 days a week.



the growers prefer ⁶ am, but they don't get to choose in
Yes, they do. ~~But~~, I think that for the first 3 days they got to
(minimum guarantee)
take what they get. But after 3 days or a weeks' time they start picking
up pretty good. The boys average between ³⁰ 20 and ⁴⁰ 30 boxes. They have a
check after their board is taken out and everything, between \$80 to \$90.
Then they charge 13¢ a day for insurance and a \$1.75 for board. ~~91¢~~
~~for insurance, and for food~~ ^{\$1.82 every 2 weeks for insurance.} And when they take out this insurance and
board, they have to take home ~~about~~ ^{between} \$60 and \$70 in two weeks time. That's
12 days working. Right now, with stripping,
They hit an average of about between \$70 and \$80 to take home after

the insurance and board is taken out. But when they're picking

ring size, they average \$40-50 take home pay. ^{They want to make families happy.}
most of 'em try to send money home. I know it, because I send them checks for them - bank
draft. May 700-1,000 pesos each pay day. (and they used to have
trouble, losing money. Many orders during W.W. II.) So now they

But, now you are bringing another point up. In Mexico these boys
are taking a beating, everything is pretty high, and some of these boys
for the last 10 years or maybe more, have left their land over there.
Some of these boys are paying men over there to run ~~in~~ their places.
But they can't afford to stay over there because they can't make a
living. Some of them have between 5 or 6 children and they like their
kids to be educated. These boys have seen quite a bit of the U.S. and
I would say one thing that I think they are doing something good for
them, by looking around here and wanting to do the things we do.
But, they claim that they won't have the guarantee that we have with
our government. They are realizing a lot of things they never realized
before. I have been looking into this because when these boys started
coming in 1943, they never had these ideas they have now. ; ideas of

going into business, and building up their farms, and doing a

When they hit the border.....

little petty thing they used to do, most are farmers. ^{include a little note telling their family what to do w/ money. It's a lot of money, but}
They would like to take back machinery
but the Govt. of Mexico won't
let them.

#2) they like to send \$80 or so, and to do this they
~~may~~ borrow from a friend. He doesn't send
any that day. The next day, he
borrows from the first fellow.

#1 They go down to El Centro; there's a big line there.
You say, "Who knows how to pick lemons?" A lot
raise their hand. You go down the line. You say,
"all right, you tell me how to pick lemons."

Do you pull 'em?" So he says "yes," you say,
"get over there - you don't know how to pick
lemons." But if they say, "you use a
ring in your left, and clippers in your left,"
you say, "don't finish it up, just move over
here."

The same thing if you're buying to pull
beets, or whatever it is. You don't care how
old they are or anything else.

In my crew I've got 5 out of 27 who know
how to pick lemons before, so you see what
you're up against. Some learn a lot faster than
others. Some a broken in pretty good
after 1 week.

As soon as they hit that border, there are 5 or 6 checkers come on ^{guns, cameras,} train, go through everything looking for new clothes, ^{anything} with a label on it. There is one place I would like to go for three days and look

around because I have been told so much about it. They have to stand in line for days & days, and they are afraid of losing their place. There is no work to do, so they just wait.

They ask for money always to come over here. Some of them sell

some of their things to come over here: like say corn, beans, things they have in storage. They come to Empalme and run out of money then they have to go back. If they don't pass the exam they have to go back. But some of these boys are so stubborn they come and work

here 6 weeks, they get homesick and they want to go back.

That is true, because some of these boys have come to the U.S.

10 or 12 times and most of the families either stay with their father-in-law, mother-in-law, brother, cousin or uncles. They leave these

families with their relatives to take care of them and to see that

nobody interferes with things. Most of these boys send their money

to their dads and mothers.

Out of 27 men I have 17 that have told me they are married. They

never tell you the truth. Example: Lorenzo Lara. For 2 years

he was not married. Later wife wrote me to ask him to send home money

for their three children.

But, all these boys that come up here, most of them, send money

back. Most of them I would say, 75% of them, and the other 25% start

sending money but they forget; they either go around to the dances here,

buy clothes, etc. But the rest of them keep sending money home.

But, when these boys come over here they are coming for the one

purpose: to make that dollar. But, I would say that 90% don't have

the education and they can't control their money. And their folks

back home can't control the money either. They send their money home

that's how I got to know a lot of these boys will be to you.

may have to pay later.

neighbor's husband sends 1,000 pesos a month.

Somebody else works their farm.

They come to me & say, "Joe, can I leave my family in your back house?" That's true, I know.

I had a boy here once, told me some friends went home & give his wife my address. he was not married. Later wife wrote me to ask him to send home money for their three children. She didn't care if she didn't get any. I have a single boy who sent \$400 in last 4 months to parents.

is true but I've had. One time 20 out of 27 sent money at one day.

They have to pay a dollar to take in a new
shirt. They are now washing 'em before
they leave. A new suitcase - they'll pay for it.
If they take a new radio, inspectors will say "Should
you get it?" Man says "Here's my receipt."
Inspectors say, "OK. That's 35 pesos." Some men
get so mad they break radios on the floor. Not,
has told me. Hundreds have told me.

→ Then a little later, they go into another state,
a couple more inspectors climb on board, and
they go through it again. If a man tries to take
shells in, they'll shake 'em down completely.

~~In Engalme right now there are 20,000 - 25,000~~
~~waiting~~ Talking about mordida, it's time. It's
very time. I know what I'm talking about.

A lot of 'em never do get a contract. They go
back home, broke, rich, ~~the~~ starving.

In Engalme right now there are 20,000
25,000 boys waiting to come in. Picking pens last
year, I had 10 out of 30 who waited 2 months. I had
another 10 who were flown from Jalisco to Engalme for
400 pesos by a coyote who said he'd give them money
back if they didn't have contact within 3 days. That's how
much he was. In they go & out they come.

Must, p. 7

~~When they start from home, Diego just~~
~~like you & me. They have heard that~~
~~There are villages, ranches. There~~
~~where 15, 20 men or more are in U.S.~~

It's just like you or me looking for
warmin'. The guy next door keeps getting big
kids. Naturally we'd like to have some of that, too.

Little kids may grow up without
knowing their fathers.

and when they return they buy land, cattle, ^{a little on sheep.} or something that can help them in the farms. ^{that's pretty nice!} They are getting wiser all the time. But, oh, I don't know. Some of these boys when they go back they want to ^{but this} ~~get~~ ^{any} tequila and beer; they don't want to work when they are home ~~once~~ more.

The pay rate here is \$10 pesos a day. So they save money here, go back, and live for a dollar a day. When they run out they come back here and make \$4 a day net. That's 50 pesos.

If these boys could make 50 pesos back home they ^{never would} ~~would not~~ come over here. Now everything they buy over there--sugar, salt, shoes, clothing--^{very expensive.} any pair of shoes, good shoes over there costs 100 to 125 pesos. *they have to come back here.*

If any of these people want to give their kids a little education, they have to stay here to support them. ~~Because, if the wife know how to take care of his money, and they can send \$25 weekly~~

Yes, I have been doing that for the last three years. No, it is a different grower. This place I am working now is ^{Consolidated} Consolidated Lemon Company. Where I am going to work in the pears is just for a rancher.

He has about 45 acres of pears, ^{so} we ^{got} to pick them in 30 days. He has a little camp over there with 6 ^{small} barracks where you can fit in 6-8 men.

It has a little kitchen that can feed about 30 men at a time. ^{2 quick} 50-60,000 field boxes in 30 days, with 30 men.

We bring these boys directly from El Centro. Then we put in a cook there to feed them. The camp is in Little Rock, near Palmdale. They get paid by the hour, ^{so} we ^{got} to work between 10-11 hours a day; because pears ^{can't} be handled too rough. ^{They have stems; you have to break 'em off; and drop 'em in the sack} We use a big sack like we use in oranges ^{PICKING} and 14-16 foot ladders, a little higher than lemon ladders. ^{roughly} We pick the pears by size. We go over these 45 acres in about 10 to 15 days. Then the rancher gives them a little shot of water; then two or three days later we turn around and strip them. ^{They'll punch the other gears.}

He has a shed with about 15 to 20 girls and they sort the pears according to size. ^{and send 'em in for storage, or sell directly to stores.} ^{We pick 'em green. They take 'em in time, set 70¢/lb.} ^{2 crew leaders don't live with their crews. \$9.50 a day} ~~No~~, they don't do that. Most of the crew leaders have their

families, like I ^{would} say Claremont and the camp ^{is} in Monte Vista; or they live in little towns near the camps. They ~~come up~~ and live with their families ^{and come out every morning between 5 & 6:00.}

So you pick your crew up and when they come there to the camp the man in charge of the camp ~~takes~~ calls the names of the men ^{when they are in the truck, etc.}

^{Remember} They have to answer, so they know every boy is going to work that day. They have a loud speaker, & ^{you} ^{say} "Joe Torrey is here for his crew, so you better come out."

You have to go through that routine every morning. If he's sick, ok, but if he just doesn't show up, we mark down RW - "refused to work." If he refuses 3 days, we send him back. So you always keep your crew together. Or if he just takes off, we report him.

You always keep your crew together. ^{We mark that down on the card} maybe 2 or 3 men a week. Change

If you stay in the camp ^{the way I am now}, you have your own cabin. You have your own toilet and your own shower.

No, you eat in the kitchen, not in the mess hall. We eat what we want. ^{suppose the} boys are having beans, ^{or rice} you can have beans if you want, or you can ask for steak whatever you want.

Well, the reason we are over there is because our company has groves over there. ~~But this belongs to the San Antonio Camp, in other words~~ ^{we have the lemons back here.} we are ^{just} stationed over there. ^{But, when that picking is done we come back.}

I started w/ present crew in January. I'll be out in till end of July. This is how it runs. I could pick lemons all year, but August is kind of slash season.

We have a different kind of menu ^{depending on} and different cooks. On Monday they give them hamburger with potatoes and corn, and beans, and salad ^{and onions in it} for dinner. ^{at night} For lunch they have poiled eggs, ^{or raw eggs. My love them,} If they want bread they can take it; they have ~~four~~ flour and corn tortillas, ^{always,} and they have to have chile, and never forget the beans. They make their own lunch ^{with waxed paper & paper bags - usually 6 or 8, a small. Then} They make a certain amount of tacos, they have a banana or an apple; 1 or 2 green chiles; ^{little} a piece of Mexican bread, ^{or a cake;} and some of ^{them} these boys if they have a thermos, they take coffee, or if not they use bottles, ^{a soda bottle, or anything} or the like for their coffee. (Cont. below)

No, like me, Most of the trucks have their own water barrels. We carry 25-50 gallons, with a hydrant or pump. Sometimes ^{in a hurry} they'll take a drink from an orchard hydrant but you got to watch 'em. ^{because sometimes it comes from a reservoir} Up in the San Joaquin Valley you use your men mostly for fruit and vegetables, it's different. You have ~~40-50 men in this, but~~ they pick with a bucket.

and in the olives they use a bucket too. But in Olives it is one of the most dangerous jobs. Even worse than dates.

Your ladders range from 20 to 30 feet. You got to put ladders ^{on a notch, with limbs only a couple inches thick.} Me, myself, I would rather pick anything else but olives. — apples, cherries, dates, anything. ^{2 oranges, you have a lot of} Take him straight to the hospital. ^{please to leave up against}

Every once in a while a man hits the concrete — last year we lost a man for a month sprained his back. Another broke his arm. We take 'em right straight to the hospital. You see, they split up groves into small lots with houses, with driveways all around, & that's the concrete. (over)

ask for lemons
50¢ 2 180¢
into place
then into
olives until
December,
or January.
Then back
into lemons.
(San
Fernando
Valley)

That
isn't
safe.
But
sometimes
it's a long
walk to
the truck.
(over)

and a
half

They had 5,000 acres in S.F. Valley, but they
split up all up -

In peaches, they have 3 step ladders(?)
always more safe. Figs, same thing. So you
you have a knife, but no ladder. But
you got to show 'em how in dis - not to put
ladder too straight, not to put bottom on
concrete, etc. The foreman has to show 'em how to be
safe.
→ is picked in all -

I had a boy who was in a hurry to get back to his
picking, didn't want to walk all the way to the
tin ch. He started drinking from hydrant. There
was a snail in there, he swallowed it. He
was really worried. I told him, "You're going
to have a whole family in there." He went
to the doctor, and he picked him up.

I worked for the C.P.C., that is one of the biggest companies in the

state of Calif. That handles ^{I had 40-50 men.} peaches. Then, I worked for the largest company in Calif. that

handles ^{and the} Boswell Company in Corcoran. We weeded fields

before machinery came in. ^{We had} 1200-250 men, 1 foreman, 1 waterboy, 2 men to file hoses. ¹⁹⁴⁵⁻¹⁹⁵⁰ These were locals, mixed with wet backs. All different races & nationalities. You had to stay on their backs ^{can't they were sitting 90% of an hour. Over}

In all those places from Sacramento down you find all these camps, clean

Most of these camps, you will find that they are doing different kinds

of picking. Like in southern California you find our biggest job is

oranges and lemons; and I think the biggest camps are Cucamonga,

Santa Paula, and Oxnard.

^{On the coast, a lot of Japanese growers have little camps - 10-15, maybe only 3-4 boys. Then there are others,}

So, I don't know for sure, but they tell me that we had between 50 and

60 thousand nationals here last year.

Well for breakfast they have eggs ^{scrambled, boiled} (raw), milk, but usually coffee,

bread, or corn or flour tortillas, ^{mostly they prefer raw eggs. They love 'em.} One day out of the week they

give them chicken for dinner. They have different kinds of soup. Then,

^{beef, cabbage, and things mixed up.}

Then they have ^{well,} In San Fernando on Monday they have pork with

potatoes, chile and corn. On Tuesday they have ^{beef, a little heavier than soup.} mole. On Wednesday

they have chicken. Thursday they give them a piece of steak, ^{just one piece,} and all the

beans they want (fried beans), ^{and} a bowl of chile, ^{like tomato sauce, but hot.}

In San Fernando they have a different idea. You set the table

^{about 20 men. A waiter brings you plate, and another one if you want. You have to say please. You ask 'em to pass the beans, and everybody else dips in, it maybe empty by the time you get it. 1 loaf of bread per table. 6 tortillas}

In San Luis Rey they always line up. They serve their meals on

trays. The men have buttons with their number. A man checks

on each man.

1 In the morning for breakfast they have ^{either} rice (cereal) or oat cereal. Mush.

I think they feed 'em pretty good. Some guys, of course. In my crew 15 will say the food is perfect, the others that it's no good. They're never happy. It's the same as the army.

Some of them didn't like this, some didn't like that.
In cotton picking you got to watch to see they
don't put rocks or clods in bottom of sack.

Let sure you have a crew of 15-20
men. You got to watch to see they don't
give you any ^{run-down on} yellow ones, or wounds.

Bed peggers you got to pick 'em when they're
just right - not too small, not red.

In tomatoes, they put rotten or green
tomatoes on bottom of bot, 'cause they're
picking by piece work. We had 100 pickers & 2 foremen.

Rosenberger called me & said, "These boys are
falling down pretty dead - only 700-800 botes a day, I
want you to go in there as a picker." A picker
says, "Boys, get on the ball. The strikers are beating
you pretty bad. You can beat that boy, you know."
They were in Santa Ana. To 1,000 botes in 3 days.
They take a beating the first 2 pickings,
because they have to prop up the branches to
let air in there. On 3rd picking, when they
go in & take away the fruit, they really clean up.

In San ~~Luis~~ Luis everyday they have bread. Then they alternate corn tortillas 1 day, flour tortillas the next. They have Kool-Aid one or two days a week; and then they have milk too. I think the law says you have to have 1 glass of milk a day. They like different things, these men. In the San Antonio Camp they have a different way of feeding them.

The association will hire a head-cook, just like a foreman, and he will get around and tell the boys what they have to do: one will cook

the beans; one will cut the onions; and ~~so on.~~

[illegible]

#1 I don't know how much. 75 cents.

I don't know whether they make a profit or not.

I know something about them making a profit, but I won't say that.

That - I don't want to get into trouble.

The ones working in the fields make same as the ones in fields.

#2 I loaned one fellow \$50 till pay day so he could buy a piece of land right alongside of his. He wanted it pretty bad. I happened to have the money. You can buy land over there pretty cheap. So he sent down \$3,000 pesos and bought the place for cash. I'd call that a good smart investment. Land is cheap down there. But they don't have water, they depend too much on rain. But pumps cost too much.

A pump costs 80,000 - 150,000 pesos down there. You can't buy one here & take it down there. I'm against it 100%. I think they ought to be allowed, depending on how long they've been here. Our govt. ought to say to the Mex. Govt. "How about it?" Selling machines & things like that - they can't take anything new with 'em, see appended...

It's a big racket, and I mean really big.

Well, I will tell you what one of the boys told me.

that, that should come from the President of Mexico, and he should put the law unto the governors of the states.

they get a kind of receipt from headquarters to come across and they don't get charged a darn cent.

But the boys that come on their own, they have to have at least 300 pesos, or else they are going to be stuck in Empalme for sometime.

The heaviest nationals start right now.

and then they send a lot of boys to Washington and Oregon, and California handles them all. They go to Montana, Utah, Idaho, Colorado; most of these boys don't like Texas. They say that the people there are very different from the people in California. They treat them pretty rough in Texas, and over here they say that most of the Anglo people are pretty nice to them.

Then they tell me this, that the wages are better here than in Texas. But, they say that they can buy the clothes cheaper in Texas. And they say that in Texas they usually take them over there to board on their own. They don't have the camps we have here; and you know over here they keep the camps very clean. They have to.



Of these boys were wise enough
 & took care of their money,
 They'd be all right. I know. I
 talk to them. I read their
 letters. (see visit #2)

A boy is taking a battery charge with
 him. It's going to cost him \$20. He's
 trying to make it look old, so he won't
 have to pay as much.

I had one fellow whose father
 was English, married Mexican woman.
 His hair was blonder than yours,
 & he had blue eyes. But couldn't speak
 word of English.

~~Discrimination~~ story of la via crucis - already
 on card?

Discrimination in Texas - on card?

Hand washing in Cuke. Cf. San Fernando
 on card?

Food poisoning in Murced camp
 in 1954 -

Mrs. Torrey - on aspirations (on card?)
 on b - local relations (on card?)



